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the size of an egg. The third curiosity is a 1-ounce bottle filled with phosphorus penta sulphide; it is labeled "5 lbs. Calcium Carbonate." What a strain on the bottle!

Now, what is the remedy? There are those who believe good may come from publishing the names of such concerns as are responsible for errors like those mentioned, but the employee is the one directly at fault and he cannot be always watched. We must not require too much and thus become impracticable. What person eating soup at dinner can be certain as to what did or did not happen to it before it reached him? Let us have standards by all means, and have hope that the manufacturers will live up to them, but let us keep an open eye ourselves, just as of yore.

W. P. MASON.

FLUSHING WATER MAINS

One of the features of maintenance work about which practically nothing has been printed is flushing water mains. There are so many opportunities for unusual and interesting incidents to occur in such work that it seems to be time to call for an account of them. Collectively, they should prove instructive reading. No matter how good the water is, mains must be flushed sooner or later, to get rid of mud, or iron, or organic matter. Possibly the nature of the contamination which makes flushing necessary will have some influence on the method of conducting the work most successfully. The general method adopted in Muscatine is as follows:

A section of a main from a few blocks to half a mile long is shut off by gates at the ends and side streets. If there is a flush gate on the section, it is opened and the main flushed out through it. If there is no gate, then the hydrants are opened, beginning with that at the highest elevation, or source of supply if a reservoir is used, and working downward, hydrant by hydrant. When the mains have been flushed, the cross-mains are cleaned out similarly. Although the work in the outlying districts is done during the day, most city flushing is best conducted in the night time so as to cause as little inconvenience as possible.

Our experience indicates that it is necessary to have a good force of men on the job, in order to be able to open the gates promptly in case of fire. The damage done by a bad fire is so much greater than the few dollars in wages for the men required to turn on water promptly when it is needed, that there is no good excuse for the slowness in restoring normal conditions when an alarm is sounded. Another thing we have learned to be careful about is blowing off a flush gate at a greater rate than the sewer will receive the water. Damages by flooded cellars, due to water backing up through a sewer, are to be avoided. Not only are the parties injured subject to needless inconvenience, but the water department is criticised in a way that raises blisters. Where a main is 16 inches or more in diameter, it is necessary to have a number of hydrants open simultaneously to do the flushing well, and in such cases attention must be paid to the effect of the water on the street pavements. Under some conditions pavements and gutters might be injured badly if precautions against it were not taken in advance. Finally, our experience with flushing indicates that where considerable deposit must be washed out there is likely to be some clogging of meters after the work is done.

This is an outline of our methods. We have developed them through a long period until they meet our local needs. But there may be other methods which will please us better, and therefore the writer hopes that superintendents will write to the editor of the JOURNAL about them, in order that all members may have the benefit of the information. Anybody who has tried to find printed information on flushing does not need to be told that technical literature is practically silent on the subject.

WILLIAM MOLIS.

SCIENTIFIC CONTROL OF WATER SUPPLIES

At a recent gathering of public officials there was a fairly general agreement that technical matters could not be made of popular interest. The writer does not agree with this view and these notes are offered in support of his opinion.

The conspicuous features of a water-works system, the imposing dams, busy pumping stations and lofty water towers, draw public attention to the need of engineering talent in connection with such public works. The enormous retail business conducted by a water department or company, the most important business in a city, of which everyone is a customer, is gradually coming to be recognized by intelligent citizens as something that should be intrusted only to able business men. But there is practically no public appreci-